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PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

FORTIETH ANNUAL MEETING,

OF THE

NEW YORK STATE COLONIZATION SOCIETY,

HELD

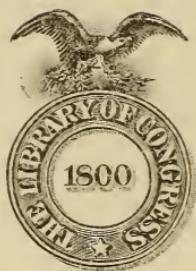
MAY, 1872.



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ANNUAL MEETING.

May 17, 1872.

The Society met at its Rooms, in the City of New York. The Report of the Board of Control was read as follows:

To the New York State Colonization Society:

The Board of Control during the fortieth year of your existence, now ending, has, with the means at its disposal, prosecuted the purposes set forth in your constitution and charter. The Rev. Doctor John B. Pinney, who, since 1843 has filled with eminent ability the office of corresponding secretary, has deemed it his duty to resign his position with a view to removal to a western State. The Board deeply regrets to lose his services. His life, from his early manhood, has been given to the work of African Colonization, and the conversion of the sons of Africa to the Gospel of the Saviour. None of the distinguished friends of the enterprise has performed more labor in promoting it, and none has met with more success in his efforts in its behalf. Five years have been spent by him at different periods in Africa, either as a missionary, or in connection with the government of Liberia, or as a Commissioner from one of the Colonization Societies of this country. His last visit to that country was in 1869, when, as the agent of this society, he spent nearly three months in going through its settlements, and ascertaining their condition and wants with a view to aid in directing the efforts of the friends of the cause in this country. To the facts then collected by him, and his judicious advice, the Society is indebted for the policy which it has since then pursued.

During the past year no person has applied to the Society for aid to emigrate to Liberia. Its labors have, therefore, been exclusively directed to the improvement of the condition of Liberia by educational movements. It has continued the support of one Professor in the College of Liberia, has aided in the support of eight

scholars in the institution, has assisted two young men not connected with the college in a course of education, with a view to the gospel ministry, and has sustained seventeen teachers of primary schools. The Rev. Edward Blyden, who had been Fulton Professor since the organization of the College, having removed to Sierra Leone to become a teacher of Arabic in the Fourah Bay College, the Board of Control nominated Mr. Martin H. Freeman as his successor. The appointment was confirmed by the trustees of the College, and he is now performing the duties of the professorship. Professor Freeman is a graduate of Middlebury College, where he received the second honor of his class. He was for some time a classical teacher in this country, and for several years hasb een professor in the College of Liberia. Of unmixed negro blood, he is a gentleman of superior attainments, and eminently fitted for his position. During the year the Rev. Jacob W. Von Brunn, a native African prince, came to our country, at the invitation of the Society and at its expense, and spent several months in visiting churches and Sunday schools, to enlist their interest in Christian work among the Bassa people, numbering over one hundred thousand souls, who inhabit a territory nearly seventy miles by one hundred and forty. His father was the king or headman of the whole territory, and was induced to send his son to Monrovia to be educated. He has for several years been the pastor of a Baptist church, consisting exclusively of native converts. While in this country he obtained means to enable him to erect a house of worship for his people, and to establish several schools among his countrymen.

The great want in Liberia at this time is a system of schools where all the children of a proper age, both emigrant and aboriginal, can obtain the elements of an English education. Imperfect English is understood in all the native towns within a distance of more than fifty miles from the coast, and the head men of these towns are anxious to have schools for their children. In many instances they would erect cheap schoolhouses could a teacher be sent to them. The republic has a college where from fifty to one hundred pupils might be constantly receiving a full collegiate education; but although it has been in operation for nine years, it has at no time had more than fifteen pupils in its college classes, and

as yet but six young men have completed its full academic course. Without the aid of preparatory schools, its usefulness will be greatly hindered for years to come.

The changes in the civil condition of the negro in our country within the last eleven years, have effected a revolution of feeling in relation to African colonization, both among the white and the colored population. With respect to the former it is manifested in a loss of interest in the enterprise. This is shown by the falling off in the contributions made in its aid. In the year 1859 the donations and legacies to the American Colonization Society amounted to \$98,639 88.

In 1868 they were	42,804 36.
“ 1869 “	32,017 64.
“ 1870 “	20,292 48.
“ 1871 “	13,842 99.

Thus, while they are now less than one seventh of their amount in 1859, they have for the last four years fallen off in each year about one quarter, or one third of their aggregate in the preceding year, until they dwindled in the last year to a sum several thousand dollars less than the amount expended by that society “for salaries of secretaries and agents, paper, and printing the African Repository and Annual Report, expenses of auxiliary societies, interest on loans, stationery, postages, &c.”* And this decrease in that society’s receipts was not owing to a want of effort to make collections. It had in its service three active secretaries and two district secretaries at generous salaries, all of whose time was devoted to its work, and a third district secretary who gave to it a portion of his time. And the acknowledgment in its organ, *The African Repository*, of donations and legacies for the first four months of the current year, do not indicate any increase of the feeling in favour of the enterprise. These are as follows :

In January,	\$1,364 65.
“ February,	951 68.
“ March,	1,963 99.
“ April,	880 10.

An aggregate for four months of \$5,160 42.

* These amounted to \$17,752 84. See *African Repository* for February, 1872, p. 35.

A similar indisposition to aid the enterprise has been manifested by the former friends of this Society. In view of it, the Board of Control has discontinued all paid agencies, and it now recommends that, until a different course is indicated by Providential developments, the Society shall confine itself to the proper administration, with the least possible expense, of the funds which have hitherto been committed to it, and such voluntary donations as it may hereafter receive.

The present condition of Liberia commands the sympathy of American philanthropists. The little republic has grown up on the coast of Africa under the labors of about fifteen thousand emigrants, sent there by the various colonization societies in this country. The survivors of these emigrants, and their descendants, now constitute its citizens. They are intermingled with, and surrounded by, an aboriginal population more than thirty times their number, men of the same race, but barbarians and idolaters. The emigrants were the poor and the ignorant: most of them were born in slavery and dwarfed by its influences. It would be as unjust to them as unreasonable, to expect that these victims of slavery without education and without property, should at once elevate themselves to the condition of American freemen. They went directly from the slave quarters of the South, with little but their own hands, to encounter and subdue a tropical forest, and render it capable of producing food for themselves and their children. It is greatly to their credit that any of them succeeded. The more fortunate have cleared for themselves small farms, and made themselves comfortable homes. A few—a very few—by superior energy, have risen above the difficulties which kept down their less gifted brethren, and accumulated moderate fortunes. But the large majority are still very poor. Yet, notwithstanding the discouragements of their situation, they have accomplished noble deeds, long to be remembered. They found six hundred miles of coast occupied by the barracoons of the slave dealers. Long before American slavery became extinct, they had been the most effective active agents in driving from its whole length the dealer in human flesh. They found a savage people, all of whose tribes were hunting men and women to sell to the slave trader, and they constrained them to abandon the diabolical

traffic. For a quarter of a century they have maintained self-government, and, notwithstanding the troubles which have been manifested in their republic during the past year, it still stands, and humanity may hope that good order will again be restored to it. With the aid of missionary societies, in the midst of their poverty, Christian ministers have been sustained, and churches, feeble it is true, planted in most of their settlements. Their example has aroused the head men of the surrounding tribes to desire their civilization. The latter have seen the good influence of the few schools which here and there have been planted, and now ask for schools where their children may be taught the English language, and become civilized. But they ask in vain. The mass of the Liberians are too poor to furnish them, and, indeed, too poor to sustain them for their own children. The whole number of schools in the republic but little exceeds thirty, and these contain less than six hundred pupils. There should be three times this number of children of the emigrants, and one hundred times the number of children of the aborigines, in a course of common school instruction.

The Board of Control is persuaded that the time has arrived when the republic is to be strengthened rather by rendering it attractive to the negro in other lands by means of educational and civilizing institutions, and by bringing to its aid the aboriginal element, enlightened and Christian, than by introducing to it, in its feeble condition, more poor and ignorant people from America: that the true policy of the friends of the negro is not to send him off ignorant and degraded, but to Christianize and elevate him here, and prepare him when he may hereafter desire to cast his lot in the home of his ancestors, to carry with him light and intelligence and thus aid in building up an African nationality: that as a feature of this policy we should aid Liberia in imparting education and Christianity not only to her own emigrant people, but to all the aboriginal people within her reach, so that the philanthropist, at a day not very distant in the future, may see it a centre of light and intelligence to the whole African continent, and the elder sister of a union of self-governing Christian states, the reflection of our own. There is reason to hope that this may be done. Her aborigines are of the same blood with her citizens. It is only edu-

cation that makes them to differ. President Roberts, in his recent inaugural address, said :—

“ It is extremely desirable that *the whole aboriginal population of the Republic* should be drawn as rapidly as possible within the circle of civilization, and *be fitted by suitable educational training* for all the duties of civilized social life.”

Without this “ *educational training* ” the children of the emigrants are in danger of lapsing into the barbarism that surrounds them. The acts of violence committed in Monrovia last autumn, were the natural results of a want of education. A wise economy in expending money for Liberia, demands that, as speedily as practicable, schools should be opened throughout its whole length and breadth, and that not an emigrant nor a native village should be without one. It costs as little to maintain a school for a year, as to send out an adult emigrant. The sum annually expended in keeping one in a native town would, in a short series of years, furnish from its pupils a much larger number of citizens fitted for usefulness than if employed in sending emigrants ; and the educated aborigines would be the better citizens.

In arriving at these conclusions, the Board of Control would not reflect unfavorably upon the policy thus far pursued by the friends of colonization. Under the circumstances which formerly existed, it was wise to send out emigrants although they were poor and ignorant. There was a reasonable probability that in escaping from the atmosphere of slavery they might better their own condition, and prepare a free and comfortable home for their descendants, and that, with aid from this country, they might improve their own civilization, and impart it to the native tribes of Africa. But the whole aspect of the case is changed. In this country the negro is not only emancipated, but he is invested with all the political rights of the white man. He is in every respect as free as his former master, not simply to labor, and be protected in the reward of his labor, but to aspire to civil honors, and become a legislator, or governor, or judge, or senator. If he is poor he has the same choice of employment before him that the poor white man has, and the same opportunities to acquire and accumulate wealth. And whenever he desires to emigrate to Africa he can as easily earn the means to take him there as the New Englander can

when he wishes to improve his condition by seeking a western home. We must now regard him as a man with the instincts and capabilities of a man, and with all his opportunities to acquire wealth or respect. There is no imperative demand of humanity to furnish such an one means to send him out of the country.

But there is a call upon American philanthropy to aid in elevating those whom we have already induced to leave this country, and seek a home in Africa, and a loud demand upon American Christianity to fit them to impart civilization and a pure faith to the millions of their barbarian brethren. The poor and ignorant just escaped from slavery can very imperfectly do this. Liberia needs quite another class of persons for the purpose; those who by education and training have become qualified to be ministers of religion, teachers, skilful mechanics or agriculturists, and intelligent, industrious, and enterprising men. With their aid she may elevate the condition of her own children, and may hope to train the hundreds of thousands of her barbarian people to make them useful citizens. The last report of the American Colonization Society gives as the language of one of her ablest citizens, "Our great desideratum is *a few thousand strong-souled, self-dependent energetic men, with a goodly modicum of intelligence.*"* The policy of our Society is to encourage such persons to go there, and if necessary to assist them to go, not as mere colonists but as emigrants. Hitherto but few such have been sent. The last expedition sent by the American Colonization Society illustrates as well as verifies the remark. It was pronounced by the officers of that society to consist of a better class than had usually been sent. Yet of the two hundred and forty-three persons who composed it, only seventeen could both read and write. Twenty-two more could read but not write, leaving two hundred and four who could neither read nor write. It is true that a portion of the two hundred and four were children, but more than one hundred of the number were of an age in which all are here expected to be readers.

With a well educated and religious people, Liberia would be a most attractive home to the negro in every land. Possessing a soil of unsurpassed fertility, and a climate adapted to his constitution, it must be that the time will come when he will be moved by the same inducements to go there which now call the Irish, the

* *Afr. Rep.*, Feb., 1872, p. 40.

German and the Scandinavian people from their native land to establish homes in our western prairies, the desire to better their condition, to leave a happier heritage to their children. And there will be other attractions to the negro—the love of race, the desire to elevate it, commercial enterprise, and more than all, the instinct of Christianity to carry the gospel to every benighted heart. In every such case the motive which leads the emigrant will be a guaranty that he will become a useful citizen, and ordinarily he will prefer to decline becoming the beneficiary of a colonization society. One who is unwilling to obtain by his own exertions at least a part of the means to emigrate, may generally remain where he is born with quite as much benefit to Liberia, as to go there to enlarge the number of her idlers.

For nearly half a century, the New York State Colonization Society has prosecuted the work of African colonization with the distinct object of elevating the condition of the negro, and by his means extending the triumphs of Christianity over the whole continent of Africa. No narrow feeling of caste, no contempt for an unfortunate race in our country, no desire to expel its children from the land to which their fathers were brought against their will has limited its benevolence, or directed its efforts. There is now no necessity for it to change its aims to accommodate itself to the altered circumstances of the negro race. They were adopted by the noble men whose names illustrate its early history ; they have been pursued by a long line of benevolent men, who have followed in their footsteps, and the Board of Control earnestly hope they will never cease to be the aims of all who may succeed them, and that with the blessing of Providence they may lead to results to call forth the gratitude of unborn millions of redeemed and regenerated sons of Africa, rejoicing under the light of the Gospel.

After reading the report it was—

Resolved, that the Society concurs with the conclusions of the Board of Control, in the annual report, and that until circumstances shall indicate the propriety of pursuing a different course, the society will best promote the object of its constitution and charter, and the views of its founders, by continuing the policy of aiding the educational wants of Liberia, and that for the present it will limit its contributions for emigration to the aid only of such

persons as are, by intelligence, culture, or skill in the arts, fitted for usefulness, leaving ordinary emigration to the operations of the natural laws which govern it in other cases.

The following persons were then elected officers of the Society—

President.

HENRY M. SCHIEFFELIN.

Vice-President for four years,

CALEB SWAN.

Managers for four years,

Rev. JAMES R. KENDRICK, D.D.,

R. M. HARTLEY,

THOMAS DAVENPORT,

HENRY B. DYER.

The Society then adjourned.

OFFICERS
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

PRESIDENT,
HENRY M. SCHIEFFELIN.

VICE-PRESIDENTS,
CALEB SWAN,
EDWARD HUNTINGTON,
JAMES W. BEEKMAN,
REV. I. B. DURBIN, D. D.

MANAGERS,
ISAAC T. SMITH..... Until May, 1873. Rev. JOHN C. LOWRIE, D. D. Until May, 1875.
CHARLES VAN WYCK " E. B. CLEGHORN..... "
MORRIS J. FRANKLIN, M. D. " ROBERT PORTERFIELD "
ASHBEL GREEN..... " Rev. R. HEBER NEWTON... "
LIBIUS B. WARD..... Until May, 1874. Rev. JAMES R. KENDRICK... Until May, 1876.
Rev. J. D. WELLES, D. D. " ROBERT M. HARTLEY..... "
WILLIAM TRACY..... " THOMAS DAVENPORT..... "
Rev. STEPHEN H. TYNG, Jr. " HENRY B. DYER... "

TREASURER,

ISAAC T. SMITH.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY,
WILLIAM TRACY.

RECORDING SECRETARY,
HENRY B. DYER.

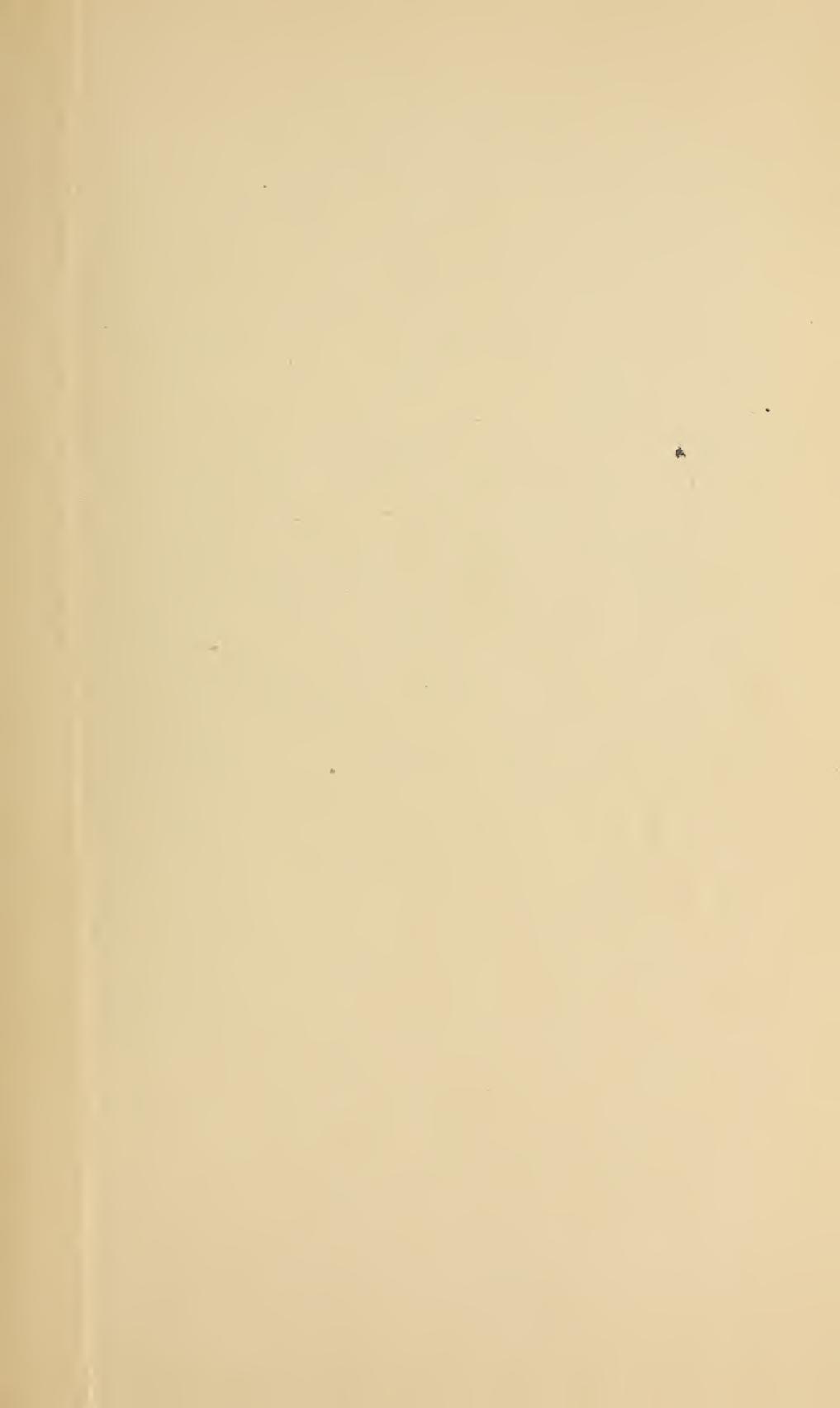
Form of a Devise or Bequest to the New York State Colonization Society.

"I give and devise to the New York State Colonization Society, the real estate described as follows: [Here insert a general description of it.]"

—*If of Money or Personal Property.*

"I give and bequeath to the New York State Colonization Society dollars [or a bond and mortgage for \$ made by A. B.; or 50 shares of the stock of]"

Professor Henry
Washington
Dul. of C.



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